

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A signature processing method for displaying a signature on a display unit, comprising:

a determining step, of determining whether a predetermined condition is satisfied; and

a control step, of displaying, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, the signature on the display unit in a manner that makes it difficult for others to discern the signature.

2. A signature processing method according to Claim 1, wherein the predetermined condition comprises the existence of an instruction given by a user to display the signature in a manner that it is difficult to discern the signature.

3. A signature processing method according to Claim 1, wherein the predetermined condition comprises the failure of a user to remember a registered signature thereof.

4. A signature processing method according to Claim 1, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, a combination of the color of a display region of the display unit for displaying the signature and the color of the signature, which makes it

difficult to discern the signature, is used.

5. A signature processing method according to Claim 1, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, an image pattern is displayed on a display region of the display unit for displaying the signature.

6. A signature processing method according to Claim 1, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, the signature is displayed in broken lines.

7. A signature processing method according to Claim 1, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, a portion of the input signature is displayed.

8. A signature processing method according to Claim 7, wherein the portion of the input signature includes a portion input within a predetermined period of time before the current input time.

9. A signature processing method according to Claim 1, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined

condition is satisfied, the signature is displayed in a flashing manner.

10. A signature processing method according to Claim 1, wherein the signature comprises coordinate data which is input using a coordinate input unit.

11. A signature processing apparatus for displaying a signature on a display unit, comprising:

determining means, for determining whether a predetermined condition is satisfied; and

control means for displaying, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, the signature on the display unit in a manner that it is difficult for others to discern the signature.

12. A signature processing apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein the predetermined condition comprises the existence of an instruction given by a user to display the signature in a manner that it is difficult to discern the signature.

13. A signature processing apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein the predetermined condition comprises the failure of a user to remember a registered signature thereof.

14. A signature processing apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, a combination of the color of a display region of the display unit for displaying the signature and the color of the signature, which makes it difficult to discern the signature, is used.

15. A signature processing apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, an image pattern is displayed on a display region of the display unit for displaying the signature.

16. A signature processing apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, the signature is displayed in broken lines.

17. A signature processing apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, a portion of the input signature is displayed.

18. A signature processing apparatus according to

Claim 17, wherein the portion of the input signature includes a portion input within a predetermined period of time before the current input time.

19. A signature processing apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, the signature is displayed in a flashing manner.

20. A signature processing apparatus according to Claim 11, further comprising coordinate input means for inputting the signature, wherein the signature comprises coordinate data which is input using said coordinate input means.

21. A signature processing program for displaying a signature on a display unit, comprising:

a determining step, of determining whether a predetermined condition is satisfied; and

a control step, of displaying, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, the signature on the display unit in a manner that it is difficult for others to discern the signature.

22. A signature processing program according to Claim

21, wherein the predetermined condition comprises the existence of an instruction given by a user to display the signature in a manner that makes it difficult to discern the signature.

23. A signature processing program according to Claim 21, wherein the predetermined condition comprises the failure of a user to remember a registered signature thereof.

24. A signature processing program according to Claim 21, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, a combination of the color of a display region of the display unit for displaying the signature and the color of the signature, which makes it difficult to discern the signature, is used.

25. A signature processing program according to Claim 21, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, an image pattern is displayed on a display region of the display unit for displaying the signature.

26. A signature processing program according to Claim 21, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, the signature is displayed in broken

lines.

27. A signature processing program according to Claim 21, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, a portion of the input signature is displayed.

28. A signature processing program according to Claim 27, wherein the portion of the input signature includes a portion input within a predetermined period of time before the current input time.

29. A signature processing program according to Claim 21, wherein, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, the signature is displayed in a flashing manner.

30. A signature processing program according to Claim 21, wherein the signature comprises coordinate data which is input using a coordinate input unit.

31. A computer-readable storage medium storing a signature processing program, the program comprising:

a determining step, of determining whether a predetermined condition is satisfied; and

a control step of, displaying, when it is determined that the predetermined condition is satisfied, the signature on said display unit in a manner that it is difficult for others to discern the signature.

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